

## **Lounging Around Works for Long Island Entrepreneur**

**Great River, NY-** Become successful by lounging around? Nothing could be further from the truth really, for successful small business owners and in particular, Long Island entrepreneur Ken Braun and his Web-based company Lounge Lizard Worldwide, Inc.

In fact, Braun started his business with a fifty-dollar investment in 1996, and through talent and hard work turned that investment into a marketing company with 15 employees and sales that are skyrocketing.

The original fifty dollars bought Braun a monthly text link to a banner design company, which in turn led to his first client--- in Africa. In the following year he set up shop at the Long Island Technology Center in Great River. By 2000 he landed a contract to develop flash-based movies for Nikon, and in 2003 he had grown his business by 40 percent. Lounge Lizard's clients now come from a wide range of industries and include such diverse organizations as Disney Interactive, American Express, Nikon and Nokia.

Braun credits some of his success to the financing provided by the U.S. Small Business Administration and Fleet Bank, as well as counseling he received from the SBA-funded Small Business Development Center in Stonybrook. He said, "The loan allowed me to purchase a wider presence on the Internet which in turn led to increased sales. It also allowed me to hire four employees including a highly qualified business development director, which I knew I needed. That has also increased my sales." Braun had heard the old stories about how difficult it could be to get SBA financing. In the end he said, "The application process wasn't as bad as I had been led to believe."

When he's not working or taking care of his children, Braun devotes his time to a number community-help organizations. Lounge Lizard created commercials for Women of Substance, an organization for abused women, and Braun was recently elected to the Board of Directors for the Suffolk County Boy Scouts of America to help them with their marketing message.

So where did the name Lounge Lizard come from, you may ask? Well, it's a carryover from the time Braun was originally in the liquor business, and he

thought, “Why not?” Although he had an inkling at the time, he had no idea how well the images the name conjures up, would draw traffic to his Web site. And based upon that traffic he has advice for other small business owners. “Most people don’t realize how they can grow their company on the Internet. I was Internet savvy when I started but to this day I am still amazed at how much business a Web site can draw,” he says. The way search-engines work these days, I would advise every entrepreneur to get a Web site if they don’t already have one.”